

Hamilton Field, Main Gate
(Facility No. 1100)
Main Entrance Road at Nave Drive
Novato
Marin County
California

HABS No. CA-2398-K

HABS
CAL
21-NOVA,
1K-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HAMILTON FIELD
Main Gate
(Facility No. 1100)

HABS
CAL
21-NOVA,
1K-

HABS No. CA-2398-K

Location: Hamilton Army Air Field
Novato, Marin County, California
Main Gate
Facility No. 1100 (Main Entrance Road and Nave Drive)

U.S.G.S.: Novato, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1954 (revised 1980)
Petaluma Point, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1959 (revised 1980)
UTM Coordinates: Zone 10; A: 542100/4213620; B: 544720/4212220;
C: 542760/4210650; D: 541040/4212600

Significance:

Facility No. 1100 is considered significant for its association with Air Force history in northern California, and with World War II actions in the Pacific Theater. While the current main gate at Hamilton was built a few years after the end of World War II, it is closely identified with the base and was constructed in a compatible style. Therefore, it is considered of exceptional importance and is included in the district as a contributing structure.

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) for a comprehensive Statement of Significance and individual report HABS No. CA-2398-A for a condensed Statement of Significance.

Description:

The present gate at Hamilton was completed in 1949 in the Mission Revival style. There are four arched throughways for traffic; two for incoming traffic and two for exiting traffic. Each end of the gate is anchored by a square tower with a pyramidal Mission tile roof and decorative exposed rafter tails. Two rows of Mission tile eaves also span the front and back of the gate. The top of each tower has two arched openings, each with a welded rebar balustrade. The base of each tower has an arched pedestrian walkway. The gate is constructed of a 2-inch by 4-inch and 2-inch by 6-inch framework with diagonal 1-inch by 10-inch sheathing and an exterior stucco facing. The interior of the arched pedestrian walkways and the arched traffic thoroughfares are also stucco-faced.

Each of the four throughways is separated by a guard station, the center station being a double. Each station has a set of traffic lights facing the oncoming traffic. Red and yellow lights face the incoming traffic and red and green lights face the exiting traffic. Each guard station has two wood doors, one on either side, permitting the guards to cross from one station to the next. The doors on the service side of each station slide open on wood tracks

**HAMILTON FIELD
Main Gate
(Facility No. 1100)**

HABS No. CA-2398-K Page 2

while the remaining doors are hinged. All the doors have horizontally divided three-light windows. Wood casement windows are horizontally divided three-light with one fixed window located on each of the thoroughfare sides, and two sliding windows located on the entrance and exit sides. As access was only available into the northernmost single guard station, it is presumed that this pattern is the same for the other station.

The interiors are sheetrock and have a single bare light bulb in a porcelain fixture. A freestanding gas heater provides heat. The central top portion of the gate is a simple Mission-style *campanario*, or bell wall, with a single opening for a 24-inch bell. The bell that hung in this structure has been removed and is currently located at the History Museum of the Novato Historical Guild in nearby Novato. This gate replaced an earlier gate located just west of the bridges over the railroad tracks.

Historical Context:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

Originally the main gate at Hamilton was located near the concrete bridges and consisted of only a sign near the sentry house. This gate was added in 1949 and was carefully designed to reflect the overall architectural theme on base. It is closely identified with Hamilton Field.

Sources:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

See also the project Field Record, roll 77, exposures 7-8.

The line drawn sketches were drafted on site in 1994 by Keith Syda, scanned into a computer and drawn by Christopher MacDonald in 1995, and corrected and finalized by Claire Warshaw in 1996 (all PAR Environmental Services, Inc. staff).

Project Information:

Hamilton Army Air Field is owned by various federal entities including the Department of the Navy, Department of the Army, United States Coast Guard, and General Services

**HAMILTON FIELD
Main Gate
(Facility No. 1100)**

HABS No. CA-2398-K Page 3

Administration (GSA). The Army/GSA parcels are being excessed and sold to private developers. The Navy property is included in Base Closure and Realignment actions.

As part of the Army's undertaking, it has been determined in consultation with the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) that the excess sale will have an affect on properties at the air field, and that these properties are components of a district that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Based on consultation with the OHP and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, pursuant to 36 CFR part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was entered into by the interested parties in March 1994. The agreement stipulated that prior to excess sale the Army must contact the HABS/HAER division at the Western Regional Office of the National Park Service, San Francisco, California, to determine the appropriate level and kind of recordation for the subject properties. The MOA further stipulated that copies of the documentation be made available to the OHP and appropriate local archives designated by the OHP. This recordation has been prepared in order to meet those stipulations.

Text prepared by: Mary L. Maniery/Judith Marvin

Title: Historian/Architectural Historian

Affiliation: PAR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INC., Sacramento, California

Date prepared: July 1995

Photography prepared by: David De Vries

Affiliation: Mesa Technical, Berkeley, California

Date of photographs: May and June 1993